

No 115  
Dec 6<sup>th</sup> 1826  
253 Market  
Am

27

#  
21

Inaugural Thesis  
on

Papal March 13<sup>th</sup> 1827  
W. L. H.

Hypochondriasis

By

Thomas P Bagwell M.D.

— Ut sit Mens Sana, in Corpore Sano, Sive.

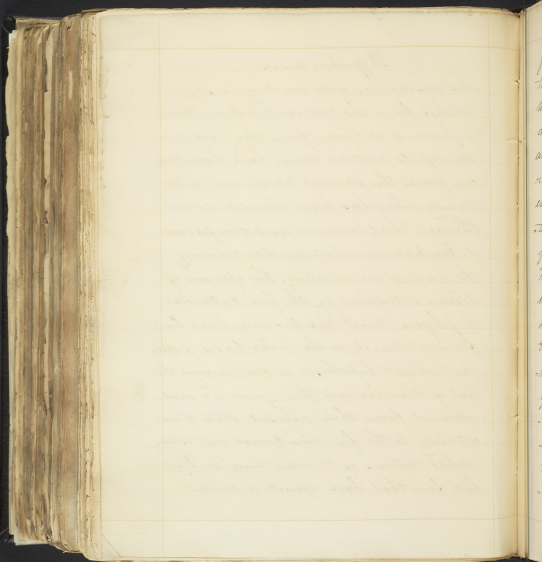
1826.

*[Faint, illegible handwriting on a lined page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]*

*[Faint, illegible handwriting on the right edge of the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]*

### *Hypochondriasis.*

This disease as will readily be supposed  
not less from the causes which are known  
to produce it, than from the peculiar-  
ities of its nature, must have been noticed  
from the earliest times; and like  
many others has been handed down  
through the clamour and confusion  
of medical revolutions still wearing  
the garb of uncertainty. The opinions of  
doctors entertained by the first cultivators  
of physic must necessarily have been  
founded much on the broad basis of specu-  
lation and hypothesis, and in viewing the  
list of diseases, and their gradual devel-  
opment from their original state of un-  
certainty, to the far more correct and estab-  
lished notions of modern times, we find  
but few that have opened a view





fits for the production of Nervous diseases  
 than Hypochondriasis. - This  
 name by general consent is given to a  
 disease principally characterized by an  
 anxious and apprehensive state of mind in  
 respect to the patient's health, and by an  
 imaginary suffering of many morbid affec-  
 tions, together with a derangement of some  
 of <sup>the</sup> Chyliferous Viscera, generally the Stomach.  
 The name given to this affection is generally  
 believed to have originated in the uneasy  
 sensations which Hypochondriacs feel in  
 that region of the abdomen called by Anato-  
 mists the Hypochondria; in support of the  
 opinion that this name was given to the dis-  
 ease as indicative of its seat; it was called  
 Miacchia by the Arabians from Miacch  
 the abdomen or belly, the opinion now pre-  
 valent that the spleen was the seat of the



disease, gave occasion to the use of the name of that Viscus to designate the disease, and the opinion that this singular affection of the Mind originated in Vapours arising from a collection of feculent and offensive matter in the spleen and first passages gave origin to the term Vapours.

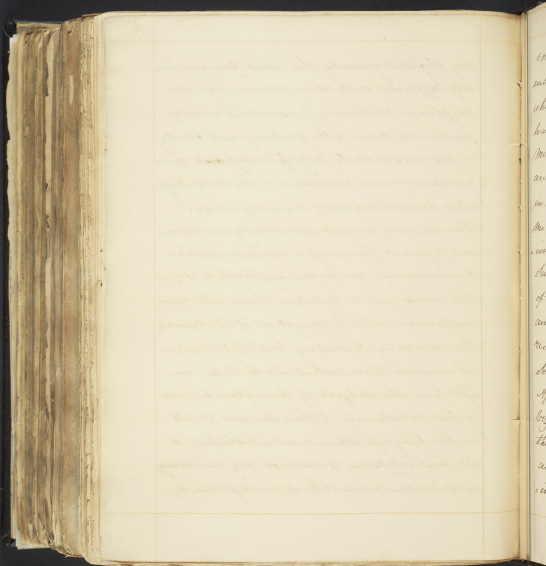
It would be impossible to give a regular detail of all the symptoms of a disease so varying and uncertain in its phenomena as hypochondriasis; on this subject we hope it will suffice to say, that after a series of symptoms indicating a deranged state of the bodily health generally, but particularly of the organs of digestion, a state of Mind succeeds marked by the following symptoms, languor, a want of resolution in all undertakings, a sadness and timidity, a constant consciousness of vice, one of the most unhappy consequences from the

*[Faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

*[Faint, illegible handwriting visible on the right edge of the page.]*

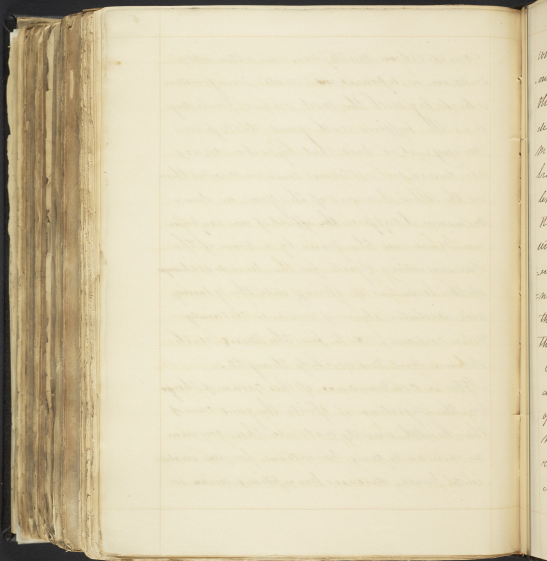
very highest grounds; the patient becomes him-  
 self afflicted with every disorder, and is  
 displeased with any person who would  
 persuade him to the contrary; and finally  
 if not arrested in its progress, a depressed im-  
 -agination arises productive of the most sing-  
 -ular sensations and enormous ideas.

This disease occurs principally in adol-  
 -escent life and persons of a Melancholic  
 temperament are peculiarly liable to it;  
 the habits and occupation have also great  
 influence in the propagation of the disorder;  
 those leading sedentary lives, the studious  
 as well as the indolent and the idle are  
 apt to be the subjects of its influence; one  
 great peculiarity of this disease, is its  
 rapid progress when once established, it  
 at first appears to consist only in a wrong  
 or mistaken idea which unless timely



connected soon Multiplex, and ultimately  
ends in a depraved ~~and~~ vitiated imagination  
which lags with the most awful forebodings  
loads the sufferer with great distress and  
Misery; it is said that hypochondriacs  
are worse in autumn and in winter than  
in the other seasons of the year, in some  
measures I suppose, the effect of our imper-  
-ious Moods on the Mind by a View of the  
surrounding objects, for the sudden change  
of the beauties of Spring into the gloomy  
and desolated show of winter is certainly  
well calculated to fill the mind with  
solemn and Melancholy thoughts.

After a continuance of this course of things  
viz. the dejection of Spirits, the great cause of  
their health, anxiety as to all their concerns,  
as well as to every sensation, for an indef-  
-inite period, diseased perceptions arise in





which they form the most unreasonable notions and to which they adhere with the strictest pertinacity; some like the painter described by Tully supposing themselves made of a fragile substance liable to be broken by the slightest touch, while others like the babes of Marcellus and Lucius fear to stand lest their legs bend under them; with these and many other notions equally chimerical strongly rooted in their minds they cannot but suffer the greatest anxiety. In others the disease verges on melancholy and in these cases we sometimes meet with suicide.

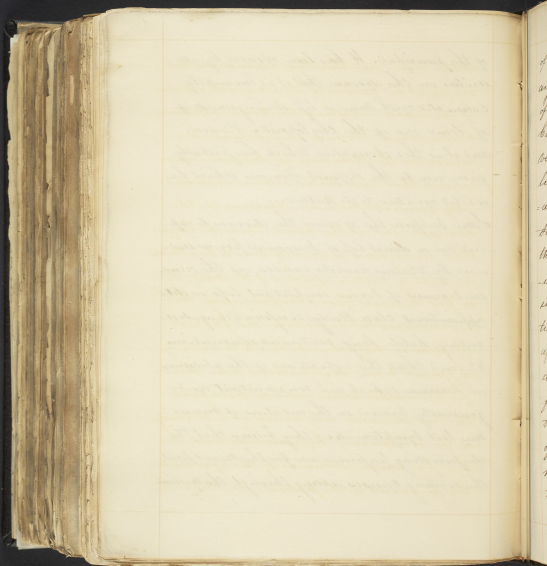
In hypochondriacs as well as in many other diseases there is much discrepancy of opinion among writers as regards its real nature; but as regards the contents of their respective views of the pathology of the disease I shall say nothing, and only notice some

*[Faint, illegible handwriting in cursive script, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

*[Faint, illegible handwriting on the right edge of the page, possibly from the adjacent page.]*

of the principal. It has been observed by all writers on the disease that it is invariably connected with more or less derangement of some one of the Chylipoietic Viscera, and it is this observation which has probably given rise to the different opinions which have existed relative to its nature.

Some suppose the disease the disease to depend on a direct loss of sensorial power induced by various remote causes, as the removal of some important loss or dis-  
 -appointment, close study, excessive Venery, sedentary habits, long continued evacuation &c and that the affections of the abdominal viscera which are concomitant and generally viewed in the relation of causes are but symptomatic; they believe that the predisposing passions are for the most part, the exciting causes, acting through the medium



of the brain, and this they adduce as an argument in favour of the idiopathic nature of the disease, or rather of the Mental affection. Cullen, whose doctrines and opinions are viewed as the standards of modern times, believes that this state of mind is invariably connected with an affection of the Stomach, but at the same time he says that dyspepsia is equally known to be attended with a certain affection of the Mind; he is far however from confounding the two diseases for he believes the gastric affection in hypochondriasis to be entirely different from dyspepsia; in order then for the author above quoted to distinguish the two diseases and arrive at a certainty of the existence of hypochondriasis he has particular reference to the age and temperament of the patient; he thinks, this

dis  
ad-  
-ence  
in  
ting  
the  
thin  
the  
in 2  
an  
the  
of  
wh  
I am  
hy  
de  
fo  
be  
a

disease almost exclusively confined to those advanced in life and of a Melancholic temperament. While dyspepsia generally occurs in the Vigour of life and to those of a Sanguine temperament; these Mental Variations attending the dyspepsia of Sanguine temperaments, he thinks are for the most part slight, and on the other hand in the disease as it occurs in the Melancholic the gastric symptoms are equally slight and more dependant on the temperament; he thinks also that the State of Mind is different in the two cases, and that when the Mental affection of the young and Sanguine resembles the disease he would call hypochondriasis, it must be attributed to a debilitated and changeable State of the Nervous power." In a word it is the opinion of Dr. Cullen that hypochondriasis is perhaps always a primary and idiopathic disease.





Others believe that the source of the mental  
 illusion is confined to the abdomen, and that  
 the disagreeable feelings, dejection of spirits  
 disordered perceptions and strange ideas are  
 merely the offspring of impressions transmitted  
 to the brain from an uneasiness in the stom-  
 -ach and bowels; and this position they support  
 by the well known fact that the disease ap-  
 -pears a much more troublesome type when  
 the patients are troubled with indigestion flat-  
 -ulency, colic, and the like. It is said by Doct<sup>r</sup>  
 Whist that the faintings, tumors, palpitations  
 of the heart, and even the fearfulness which  
 attends the disease, may be now frequently  
 owing to the inferior state of the prima via  
 than to any defect either in the brain or  
 heart. This evidently appears to be the most  
 plausible doctrine of the nature of this disease  
 yet it must be acknowledged that it is not



easy to trace the erroneous perceptions of air  
hyperochondriac to the original yet painful  
lesions in the body.

Among the supporters of this opinion concerning  
the pathology of hyperochondriaci viz. that it  
has its origin in some of the abdominal viscera  
May be mentioned the name of brierley the  
author of "An Inquiry into the origin and nature  
of Mental Derangement." This author in ac-  
counting for the progress of the disease from  
its first symptoms and most simple form, to  
its full development and most aggravated  
stage says "A firm belief in any per-  
ception must take place until it acquires  
a certain degree of force, and as all the  
impressions which arise from the viscera of  
the abdomen are necessarily obscure we  
see the reason why there must continue for  
a certain length of time or be often repeated

The first of these is the  
 question of the  
 second is the  
 third is the  
 fourth is the  
 fifth is the  
 sixth is the  
 seventh is the  
 eighth is the  
 ninth is the  
 tenth is the  
 eleventh is the  
 twelfth is the  
 thirteenth is the  
 fourteenth is the  
 fifteenth is the  
 sixteenth is the  
 seventeenth is the  
 eighteenth is the  
 nineteenth is the  
 twentieth is the  
 twenty-first is the  
 twenty-second is the  
 twenty-third is the  
 twenty-fourth is the  
 twenty-fifth is the  
 twenty-sixth is the  
 twenty-seventh is the  
 twenty-eighth is the  
 twenty-ninth is the  
 thirtieth is the  
 thirty-first is the  
 thirty-second is the  
 thirty-third is the  
 thirty-fourth is the  
 thirty-fifth is the  
 thirty-sixth is the  
 thirty-seventh is the  
 thirty-eighth is the  
 thirty-ninth is the  
 fortieth is the  
 forty-first is the  
 forty-second is the  
 forty-third is the  
 forty-fourth is the  
 forty-fifth is the  
 forty-sixth is the  
 forty-seventh is the  
 forty-eighth is the  
 forty-ninth is the  
 fiftieth is the  
 fifty-first is the  
 fifty-second is the  
 fifty-third is the  
 fifty-fourth is the  
 fifty-fifth is the  
 fifty-sixth is the  
 fifty-seventh is the  
 fifty-eighth is the  
 fifty-ninth is the  
 sixtieth is the  
 sixty-first is the  
 sixty-second is the  
 sixty-third is the  
 sixty-fourth is the  
 sixty-fifth is the  
 sixty-sixth is the  
 sixty-seventh is the  
 sixty-eighth is the  
 sixty-ninth is the  
 seventieth is the  
 seventy-first is the  
 seventy-second is the  
 seventy-third is the  
 seventy-fourth is the  
 seventy-fifth is the  
 seventy-sixth is the  
 seventy-seventh is the  
 seventy-eighth is the  
 seventy-ninth is the  
 eightieth is the  
 eighty-first is the  
 eighty-second is the  
 eighty-third is the  
 eighty-fourth is the  
 eighty-fifth is the  
 eighty-sixth is the  
 eighty-seventh is the  
 eighty-eighth is the  
 eighty-ninth is the  
 ninetieth is the  
 ninety-first is the  
 ninety-second is the  
 ninety-third is the  
 ninety-fourth is the  
 ninety-fifth is the  
 ninety-sixth is the  
 ninety-seventh is the  
 ninety-eighth is the  
 ninety-ninth is the  
 hundredth is the

before they can draw a persons attention from  
 the ordinary impressions of external objects,  
 which are clear and distinct, and before they  
 acquire such a degree of stupidity as to destroy  
 the operations of reason. That this unhappy  
 state of mind denominated hypochondriasis  
 is occasioned by some disordered state of  
 the abdominal viscera, and most generally  
 of the stomach appears to be the popular doc-  
 -trine of the present day, and in fact a late  
 \*writer has gone so far as to say "that hypo-  
 -chondriasis is as truly a gastric disease as  
 any to which our systems are liable." He also  
 goes farther and denies the existence of any  
 mental disease whatever as purely idiopathic  
 If then this affection of the mind has its seat  
 in the stomach or other of the abdominal  
 viscera we are necessarily led to enquire into  
 the nature of this diseased state of the viscera.



and as we frequently see the Stomach much  
 disordered by indigestion and other diseases, the  
 Mind at the same time being unimpaired, it can  
 only be ascribed to an impure and vicious  
 Causes. Notwithstanding the difference of opinion  
 which has existed as respects the Nature of the  
 disease action, almost all agree in ascribing  
 it to the same remote causes, among which  
 as the principal we may mention Close Study,  
 great anxiety, for the attainment of some impor-  
 -tant end or object, excessive Venery, sedentary  
 habits, a constant recollection of some mat-  
 -ter left or disappointment, improper diet, long  
 continued evacuations, to which has been  
 added intermittent and remittent Fevers.

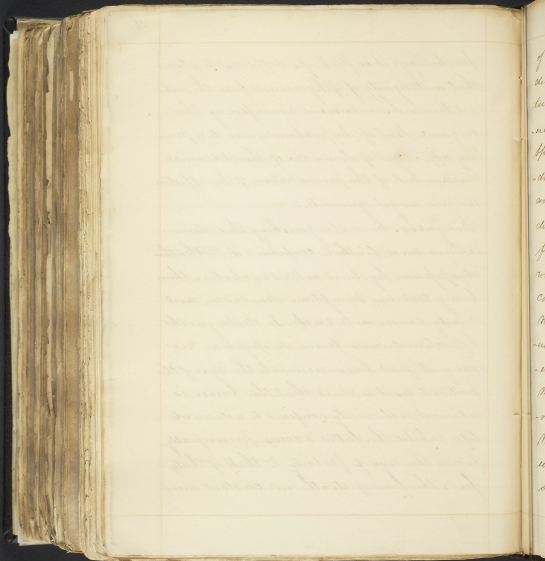
To enumerate ~~the~~ mention the proximate cause  
 of the disease, would only be to recapitulate  
 the different views that I have before mentioned  
 that different authors have entertained of it.

17  
The first of these is the  
fact that the human mind  
is not a blank slate at birth  
but is filled with ideas  
and feelings which are  
the result of the influence  
of the environment upon  
the individual. This is  
the basis of the theory  
of the development of  
the human mind which  
is the foundation of  
the science of psychology.  
The second of these is  
the fact that the human  
mind is not a single  
entity but is composed  
of many different parts  
which are all influenced  
by the environment. This  
is the basis of the theory  
of the development of  
the human mind which  
is the foundation of  
the science of psychology.



pathology; it is perhaps sufficient to observe that a Majority of Physicians from the earliest times have coincided in referring the original seat of hypochondriasis to a primary affection of some one of the abdominal viscera, but of the precise nature of the affection we are as yet ignorant.

Diagnosis. In distinguishing this disease we are most liable to confound it with either dyspepsia, hysteria or Melancholia, there being certain symptoms similar in, and nearly common to each. To distinguish hypochondriasis from dyspepsia, we may at first have recourse to the age of the patient, as it is said that the former is almost exclusively confined to advanced life, whilst the latter occurs principally from the age of puberty to that of thirty five; the fear of death and constant dread



of evil may also be regarded as an important diagnostic symptom. Cullen distinguished the two diseases, principally by the peculiar temperature of the patient, of which I have before spoken. - By many of the old writers hypochondriasis and hysteria were considered as one and the same disease, differing only as the delicate frame and constitution of the female differs from the more hardy and robust nature of the Male, but there are now considered as distinct diseases. First I believe noticed as such by the learned and distinguished Fred. Hoffman; the spirits of the patients in the two diseases before us afford the most satisfactory line of distinction; in hypochondriasis as has before been said the mind is fixed in gloom and sadness, exhibiting every appearance of the utmost dejection and sorrow, whilst in hysteria the spirits are

*[Faint, illegible handwriting in cursive script, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

*[Faint, illegible handwriting visible on the right edge of the page, possibly from the adjacent page.]*

often gay and buoyant, and bearing the countenance of mirth and hilarity.

Hypochondriasis may be distinguished from Melancholia by the gastric affection which is almost always its concomitant, whereas in Melancholia it is but rarely seen, and when it does attend the disease it generally succeeds the mental affection which is the reverse in hypochondriasis. It is said that these two diseases occasionally degenerate into each other and hence there must arise some difficulty in forming a correct diagnosis, particularly from the symptoms which arise from the depressed state of the mind; it is however considered that in this case it is unimportant as the treatment in either case is nearly the same.

Prognosis. We have <sup>no</sup> specific signs by which we are enabled to judge of the duration or

*[Faint, illegible handwriting across the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]*

ter  
no  
st  
the  
-es  
-ce  
ge  
-al  
pe  
De  
in  
a  
e  
b  
h  
-w  
T  
a

termination of this disease; it is however  
 when recent to be regarded as rather trouble-  
 some than dangerous, but if long continued  
 it is said to be apt to terminate in Schirrh of  
 the viscera, Cachexy, dropsy, incurable Melan-  
 choly or Madness. - In this disposition of Hyp-  
 ochondriac some of the abdominal viscera are  
 generally found to be enlarged, and occasion-  
 ally there is effusion and turgescence of the  
 vessels of the brain.

Treatment. We come now to by far the most  
 important division of our Subject, and for  
 a correct knowledge of which all our other  
 enquiries concerning the disease are  
 but accessories; to cure a disease of any  
 kind, is not only the most important know-  
 ledge a physician can possess but also  
 the most difficult to attain, and when  
 attained equally difficult to reduce to

*[Faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

*[Faint, illegible handwriting on the right edge of the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]*



Successful practice. The indications of  
 cure in hypochondriasis are different from  
 almost any other disease as much as we  
 have to encounter not only a variety of sym-  
 ptomatic derangements, but also to contend  
 with a most obstinate alteration of the  
 mind; these are the two great landmarks  
 by which we are to direct our practice in  
 the cure of this disease. It is said that as  
 this affection is purely a symptomatic  
 disease, we have only to reconstitute the stom-  
 ach in its healthy action, and the erroneous  
 perceptions and false ideas of the patient  
 will instantly vanish; there is no doubt we  
 think but that the affections of the abdomi-  
 nal viscera claims our first and principal  
 attention, but at the same time we think  
 as auxiliary in the cure it would be well  
 to direct some attention to the mind, namely  
 by presenting to the patient a variety of new

*[Faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

and  
with  
you  
Mon  
To  
fin  
who  
or a  
water  
Mo  
of  
Rau  
gr  
the  
con  
of  
ale  
lye  
pa  
of

and interesting circumstances, connected by  
a natural chain of association. Thus  
gradually weakening the deranged and  
Morbid Concentration of ideas.

To cure any disease we must necessarily  
first enquire into the remote causes, which  
when ascertained are either to be removed  
or avoided; in this instance we have before  
noticed what are considered some of the  
most common of the remote causes, all  
of which require prompt removal;  
Having thus checked the farther influence  
of what we suppose the remote cause of  
the disease, we are then to endeavour to  
cure those symptoms which arise out  
of the Morbid State of the Stomach and  
alimentary canal, as well as of the organs  
lying in their vicinity, and suffering by sym-  
pathy in their derangement; it is <sup>for</sup> many  
of these symptoms that we must with a view

*[Faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

the  
an  
ac  
the  
its  
has  
ate  
our  
Her  
ac  
be  
-cy  
-be  
his  
en  
b  
ap  
d  
in  
cl

striking similarity between this disease and dyspepsia, yet the practice in some respects is quite different. The stomach which is the organ most generally affected, and which by its powerful influence over the neighbouring viscera may be productive of many of the attending symptoms, first attracts and demands our attention. From the slow evacuation of the stomach in this disease, we often meet with acidity, and a collection of cruditates in this viscus, and as a consequence we have flatulency, eructations, heartburn and the like, to remove these symptoms, absorbents, cathartics and the like have generally been given, but more lately emetics have been advised, or more rarely to a slight saturation. The use of emetics in hypochondriasis appears to have been noticed by some of the older writers, for we find that Sydenham strongly insisted on the use of such medicines as thoroughly cleanse out the stomach, but repeated vomits in

*[Faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

*[Faint, illegible handwriting on the right edge of the page, possibly from the adjacent page.]*

particulars, in conclusion he says that these medicines answer all the purposes which a man of experience and philosophy, and one acquainted with the animal economy, can expect in such diseases in their first stages. If the two opinions, whether vomiting be correct or not in this disease we venture to affirm the former, limited however to certain cases; in this disease we believe the stomach to be for the most part enfeebled, in consequence of a continued irritation of its mucous surface, and if with this state of the stomach the tongue be dry or furred or matting, the epigastrium tender on pressure and the skin irregularly hot and flushed - emetics by irritating vice move the lining membrane of the stomach, vice certainly aggravate the disease, but emetics given in the very commencement of the disease, before the symptoms have become so aggravated, with a view to their attenuative effects I think must be useful.

*[Faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]*

*[Faint, illegible handwriting on the right edge of the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.]*



Owing to the intimate connection between the  
 Stomach and other portions of the alimentary canal,  
 we often have costiveness as an attendant on  
 the disease to a considerable extent, this as it  
 tends to keep <sup>up</sup> irritation is to be removed by  
 soliciting evacuations daily at stated hours,  
 or by some gentle laxative, or perhaps better  
 by an injection. From the great sympathy between  
 the Stomach and Liver, the hepatic functions are  
 often performed with great torpor and inactivity  
 in this disease: when this state of the liver does  
 prevail, its removal constitutes an important part  
 in the treatment, in as much as this remedy cal-  
 -culated to remove the dyspeptic symptoms never  
 affords but a very slight alleviation of the symptoms  
 so long as the liver is out of order, To meet this  
 indication the most useful remedy consists in  
 maintaining a gentle operation upon the bowels by  
 means of mild Mercurial preparations proportion-  
 ed to the greater or less degree of torpor of the

all  
gan  
his  
the  
Cin  
the  
in s  
gave  
to  
of T  
tely  
only  
when  
the  
held  
Hap  
to B  
dis  
to  
for

alimentary canal. Having now removed the  
 gastric symptoms, reinstated the bowels in their  
 healthy action, and restored the healthy func-  
 tion of the liver, we think the last half of the  
 cure is finished. It has been thought that  
 there was actually a loss of tone in the stomach  
 in hypochondriasis and that tonics were conse-  
 quently a most important class of Medicines in  
 its treatment. Haller with others proscribed the use  
 of tonics in this disease, believing that <sup>there</sup> was in re-  
 ality not a direct loss of tone, but a want of activity  
 only that is to be remedied. According to the notion  
 which I have formed relative to the pathology of  
 this disease tonics are in a disuse path, and in this  
 place the following plan of treatment at this  
 stage is thought preferable, ~~every~~ <sup>every</sup> thing calculated  
 to stimulate the stomach and bowels is to be avoid-  
 ed, and by food light and nutritious in season  
 to restore the stomach to its natural healthy  
 functional exercise, and as a potent the cure

of  
of  
an  
To  
qui  
pro  
up to  
Leon  
Hes  
resp  
tion  
big  
the  
and  
an  
bl

of chalybeate Water, tepid bathing, and friction  
of the whole body with coarse flannel cloths  
are strongly recommended.

To conclude, we most sedulously advise the  
withholding of all strong or morbid Stimuli  
from the Nervous System, whether they act on the  
external Senses or the Mind; but at the same  
time to insist on the enjoyment of the natural  
Stimuli; as to the circulation by exercise; to the  
respiration by pure air of a moderate tempera-  
ture; to the Skin by comfortable clothing; to the  
sight by the varied Colours of Nature's living; to  
the hearing by the harmony of poetry and song;  
and to the brain or Mind by awakening pleas-  
urable recollections and holding out the  
bland allurement of hope. —

Finis.



